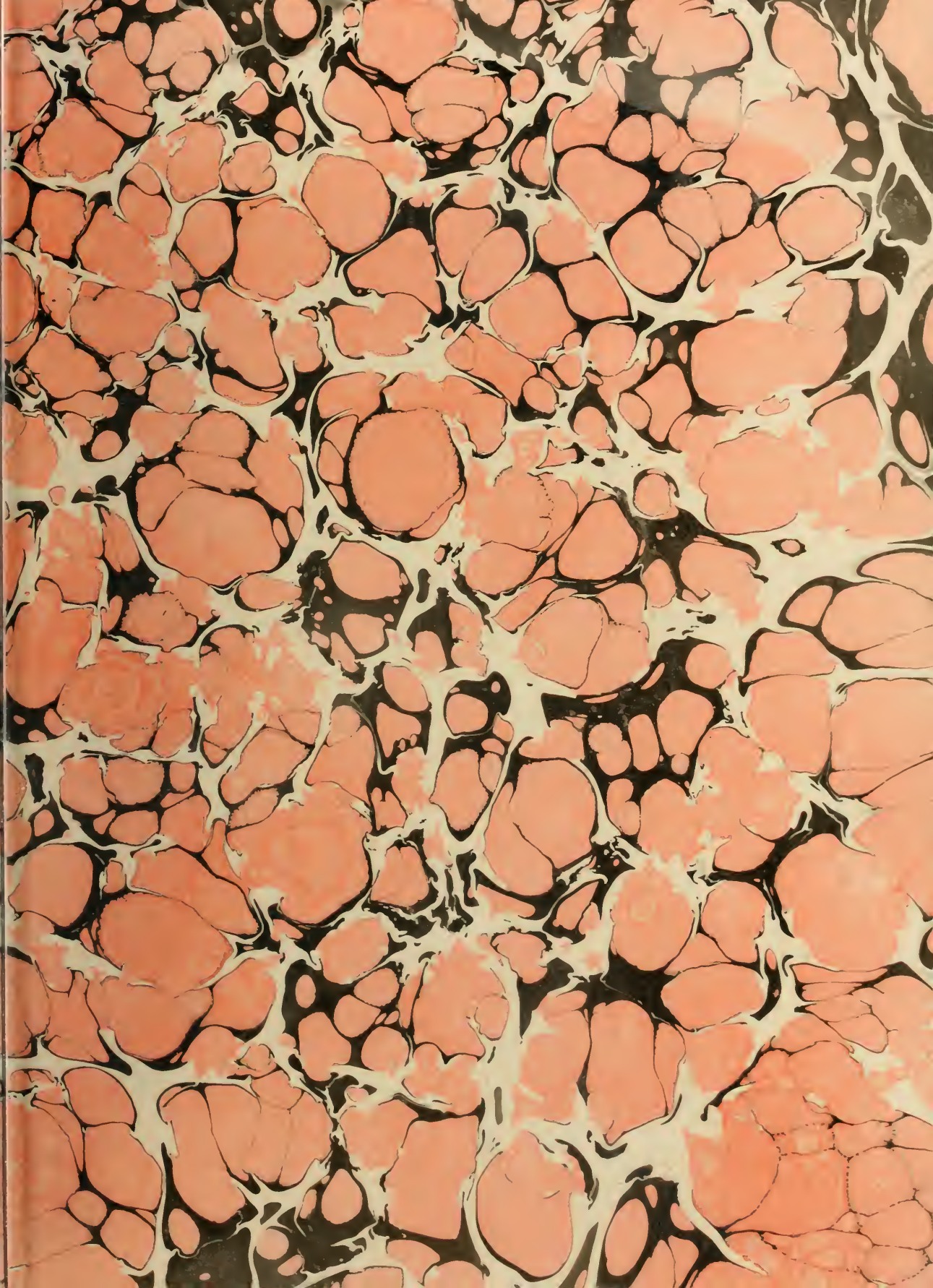

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The MODERATOR's

REASONS

AGAINST THE

Peerage-BILL,

Examined, and Anſwered.

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The MODERATOR's REASONS AGAINST THE Peerage-BILL, Examined, and Anſwered.

THE MODERATOR coming forth with all the Appearance of Impartiality, tho' with all the real and determined Zeal poſſible for *one* Side of the great Queſtion now in Agitation; it is worth while to conſider the principal Points he has laid before the World.

His *firſt* Difficulty, propos'd in his Anſwer to the firſt Argument *for* the Bill (*p.* 7.) is this, That the preſent Miniſters may be ſuſpected of having ſome few *Jobs* in view; from their making a Number of Lords at once, by this very *Bill* now propoſed, which is declared to be deſigned to prevent making any ſuch Numbers for particular *Jobs*.

I am jealous of *Miniſters*, as well as *He*. But I will tell him a few Reaſons, why I cannot give into his Suſpicion upon

on this particular Occaſion. The firſt is, Becauſe if They had had any ſuch Bye-End in view, they could have compaſs'd it as well *without* this Bill, as *with* it; and have been as free from Clamours and Reproaches, as They are upon the preſent Occaſion. The *Power* in the *Crown* being untouched, They could, in this Time, in which *They* have had Influence, have introduced ſeveral Lords well choſen for their purpoſe. The Number of Lords made ſince the *King*'s Acceſſion, not being at all to be placed to *their* Account, but their *Predeceſſors*; They were free to begin their own Account; and by this Time might have had a ſteady and ſecure *Majority*, if this Author will be ſo hard as to imagine, that the preſent *Majority* it ſelf is ready, near to a Man, to ſtand by Them in *Particular* and Unjuſtifiable *Jobs*. For without the Suppoſition of the preſent *Majority* being thus generally determined; the Addition of a *Number* will do but little Service; and *with* it, the *Addition* of a *very few* will make all ſecure. And the *Addition* of a very few would not look either daring or criminal, in Thoſe who have not yet added more than *one* Lord to the Number They found. And this Conſideration alſo is ſome Argument of no ſuch vile Deſigns now in view, becauſe the *Miniſters* have never ſhewn any Diſpoſition to uſe the Power They have, for the Increaſe of the Number of Lords. And it is not juſt to ſuſpect Thoſe, who have given no ground for Suſpicion in this Point; whatever their other Faults may have been. Another Reaſon is, That the Succeſs of the *Bill* now on foot will not more help them in any ſuch Deſign, than their Influence for the Addition of more Lords, *without* it. Perhaps not ſo much. For, in the preſent Propoſal, the Fifteen New Lords cannot be made choice of, ſolely with a View to any particular Jobs; but, if with any private View, to the paſſing this Bill, and to the preventing ſome Evils, particularly in *Scotland*. The Miniſters can't avoid pitching upon ſome of the principal Families *there*, even whilſt They know

know, or ſuſpect them, not to be thoroughly inclined to Themſelves. And, as for the *Other* Lords to be added, it has generally been ſaid, that the Choice of *Them* is not ſo much for future *Jobs*, as for the *preſent Job* of carrying this Bill: which certainly is the moſt probable Imputation that this Occaſion furniſhes. But now, could not any other Particular *Jobs* be better ſerv'd, even *without* this Bill; when the Miniſters might make uſe of their Power, and fix upon Proper Perſons, without any *other* View, but That of theſe ſuppoſed *Jobs*, to which alone They might accommodate their Promotions; according to a Famous *Precedent*?

This Author indeed ſays, that a late Flagrant Inſtance of making *Twelve Lords* for a particular *Job*, having been univerſally diſapproved of, will be ſo far from being a Precedent for what *may be* done, that it will be a ſtanding Proof of what *may not* be done, (*Ib.*) When ſo ingenious a Writer can advance this, it is a very great and *ſtanding Proof* that He was at a Loſs for a better Anſwer to give. For how a *Precedent*, which is long ago paſt, and acquieſced in, without any publick judicial Mark, either of Puniſhment or Diſgrace, ſhould be any ſort of Argument that a Thing *will not* be done *again*, which has been done *once* with Succeſs; and this by Men who are ſuppoſed to have *Jobs* and wicked Deſigns in View; ſurpaſſes my Underſtanding. For let us ſuppoſe the worſt, that theſe Evil Miniſters ſhould have made a Number of Lords for a *Job*, without this Bill; and ſhould be impeach'd for it: What have They to fear? Their own preſent Friends in the Houſe of Lords, who are ſuppoſed to be their Fix'd Friends, and to ſtand by Them even in their particular *Jobs*, will acquit Them. The Additional Lords will, for their own ſakes, join in this. And the Noble Lord who made the *Precedent*, and has already defended it in the *Houſe*, will join his Strength, and bring in his Number to juſtify Others in what will for ever juſtify Himſelf.

Since therefore, They have little to fear, from making a Number of *Lords*, ſuppoſing Them to have particular Bad Views; it is not very reaſonable to Suſpect them of theſe *Bad Views*, merely for doing *That* in a difficult and extraordinary Method, which They could as effectually and as ſecurely do, by ſtrengthening Themſelves by degrees in a more common and eaſy Method; or by doing it all at once in a Way, for which They have already a *Precedent*; which none will ſtick at, who do not ſtick at ſuch *Jobs* as make it Neceſſary.

Neither is it any more generous, than it is reaſonable, to ſuppoſe that, amidſt the mutual Diviſions amongſt the *Scotch* themſelves, They ſhould all be ſtill ready to *Unite* to do *Jobs* for *Miniſters*; or that the Majority of the *Houſe*, which now appears on their ſide, would not greatly diminiſh, enough to carry Votes againſt Them, upon any ſuch occaſion. And yet without theſe Two unreaſonable Suppoſitions, the *Fifteen* New Lords to be added, can never be ſuppoſed to make a Certain Majority for Unjuſtifiable *Jobs*.

But, what ought to be accounted a very ſufficient Anſwer to this Difficulty in the account of the MODERATOR, is, That He himſelf is pleas'd to repreſent the *Miniſters*, (*p.* 9.) as perſuading the King againſt increaſing the Number of *Peers*; whilſt He is, in other Places, inſinuating Evil *Deſigns* engaging Them to increaſe them. For if this latter be a *Juſt Inſinuation*; (which certainly may lie equally againſt all Miniſters;) then it is very fruitleſs and inconſiſtent to talk of *Miniſters* doing what it is next to impoſſible to conceive them to do. And if the MODERATOR has no Remedy for this Increaſing Evil, but the *Moderation* of *Miniſters*, He muſt either let go his Inſinuations of Terrible Deſigns, or let down in deſpair of a Cure. And that He himſelf ſees and knows the *Remedy*, He here pro-

poſes

poſes is a *Mock-Remedy*, is plain from his propoſing a Scheme afterwards, for an *Act* of *Parliament* to come in, to the Aid of the *Miniſters*.

To the 2d *Argument* for the *Bill*, (*p.* 8.) He does indeed give ſo ſhort and wide an Anſwer, that it ſeems not to belong to it. He reckons *Thirty One Lords* to be added, when, in truth, There can be no more ſuppoſed than *Fifteen*. He paſſes entirely over that part of the *Argument*, which is the *Principal*, and relates to the keeping *Property* in the *Commons* and their *Electors*, ſtill. For He well knows that *Nine* of theſe *Fifteen* being already *Lords* in *Scotland*; and *Six* at moſt being to be taken from the *Britiſh Commoners*; the *Bill* does not remove much *Property* out of the Hands of the *Commons*; and therefore, does not at all in this Reſpect deſerve his Cenſure, of doing the very thing it pretends to prevent; or his *Compariſon* taken from a *Man's running into a Fire, to prevent his being burnt*. There are *Fifteen* added indeed by the *Bill*. But I have ſhewn that They might be added *without* it, and that there would not now need ſuch a *Bill*, had it been the View of the *Miniſters* to have got a Number of Lords ready for any private End of their own; or had the preſent Increaſe of the *Houſe* been their Main Aim in this propoſal. Of his *Scheme* to perſwade Kings not to make *Lords*, which is his *Sovereign Remedy* for preventing *Rich Commoners* from leaving their Station, I have ſaid enough; if any thing needs to be ſaid, after once mentioning it.

As to his Anſwer to the *Third* Argument which relates to the *Scotch part* of the Bill; He acknowledges that *Private Perſons* ought to ſubmit to ſome Hardſhips, for the ſake of *Publick Good*. So that then the Queſtion will be, whether the *Publick Good* does not weigh on the Side of this part of the Bill. His Fears about Diſcontents in *Scotland*, would have been

better

better placed on the other Side, according to the Beſt Judges; ſuppoſing no Hereditary Seat in *Parliament* granted to Thoſe of the *Scotch* Nobility, who have Claims quickly to be tried, the unavoidable denial of which *Claims* muſt cauſe a very great Flame both in *Friends* and *Enemies*; and is likely to be eſteemed a much greater Indignity and Breach of the *Union*, in a *Point* which was ſo *eſſential* to it, that without the *Suppoſition* of the Juſtice of ſuch *Claims*, there had not been One Vote for this *Union* it ſelf in *Scotland*. He needs be in no *Concern* about the *Sixteen Scotch* Lords. They ſeem very eaſy and ready to meet their Neighbours and Brethren in their own Country, without any *Fear* of much Reproach. They know how many Perſons of the greateſt Conſequence will be pleas'd with their *Action*, in compariſon of *Others*; and They ſeem to think They ſhould have been falſe to the Honour and Good of their Country, had They acted any other Part than what They have now acted: Several of them having reſolved never to return more to *Parliament* upon the diſhonourable Foot of *Election*.

His *Fourth* Argument, (*p.* 13.) was never made an *Argument* for the Bill, till He himſelf made it one; to ſhew that He is far from the Spirit of a True MODERATOR, or a Diſintereſted Perſon. The *Inclination* of the *Lords* towards the *Bill*, is no Argument, to be ſure, to a *Commoner*; but ought to awaken Him, and engage his Attention. But if this *Inclination* be founded only upon the Value of every ſingle Peerage, and is of no Prejudice to the *Commons*, as ſuch; then it ought not to be made an Argument *againſt* it. Juſt as the *Inclination* of the *Commons* for keeping the *Number* of Parliamentary *Boroughs* limited, ought not to be any *Argument* to the *Lords* for deſiring or preſſing an *Increaſe* of them.

I now come to the *Main Part* of the MODERATOR's Deſign, which was to propoſe a *Scheme* to remedy the *Evil* pre-

pretended to be remedied by this Bill; as effectually, and without the Inconveniences of the *preſent* Propoſal. And that is, as He expreſſes it, (*p.* 15.) "That No Lord ſhall Vote in "the *Upper Houſe*, within Two or Three Years after his be-"coming a Member of it." I will now mention a *Reaſon* or *Two*, which, at firſt ſight, ſeem very powerful againſt this Propoſal. *One* is, what follows immediately in his own Performance, "This, ſays He, would, in all probability, put a "ſtop to the increaſing the *Number* of *Peers*, ſince Men of "Active Spirits, and conſpicuous for their Parliamentary A-"bilities, whoſe Requeſts to the Crown look moſt like De-"mands, would hardly care to be placed for ſo long a Time "in a State of Inaction." To which, He preſently adds, "That this would likewiſe leave the *Prerogative* of making "Peers entire to the *Crown*." A very ſurprizing Method of leaving a *Prerogative entire*, to clog it with a *Condition*, which, in his own Opinion, would prevent its being exerciſed upon *Thoſe*, upon whom alone, or at leaſt chiefly, it ought to be exerciſed! How widely do *I*, and the MODERATOR, differ upon this Occaſion? *I* would have the *Peerage* ſomething ſo valuable, that it ſhould be thought by the moſt Meritorious Commoner, ſomething worth *meriting*: and *He* would have it in ſuch a *Condition*, that None of his *Brother-Commoners* ſhould think it worth accepting, but Men of *Unactive Spirits*, and *Low Abilities*. *I* wiſh to ſee the Peerage ſo circumſtantiated, that the *Crown* may be even, as it were, confined to Men of conſpicuous Merit, in its Promotions: and *He* wiſhes to confine its Choice to Men of the Meaneſt Abilities, and the loweſt Genius. So that here are Two Reaſons againſt his own *Scheme*, furniſhed by Himſelf. The *firſt* is, That a *Peerage*, upon his Project, will not be worth the Acceptance of a Man of *Great Merit*. The *Second* is, That the *Crown* will therefore be forced, upon many Occaſions, to make the Houſe of Lords overflow with *Unactive Spirits*, and Want of Merit. Thus does the MODERATOR conſult the

Honour of the *Commons*, by leaving the *Beſt* of them, without any Reaſon, to accept of a *Peerage*; and the Dignity of the *Crown*, by confining its Honours to Thoſe who don't deſerve them. If the *Commons* can be content with ſuch a *Scheme*, which takes from the Beſt of them all *Inclination* to a *Peerage*; This alone will remove all their *Objections* againſt the preſent Bill, founded upon the *Few Vacancies* it will leave for the Reward of the Merit of *Commoners*. For *this Scheme* leaves None, that *Merit* will have any Inclination to fill. The *Crown* is but ill complimented by it. The *Houſe* of *Lords* is favour'd by it with the Honour of all *Geniuses* below this *Author*'s Deſcription. And the *Houſe* of *Commons* will, in a very diſagreeable way, be forced to keep all its *Uneaſy Merit* within its own Doors.

But I muſt not forget another *Objection* to *this Scheme*, which Every other *Writer* againſt the preſent Bill, except the MODERATOR, will preſently make. For it is evident, that the *chief* Objection They all make is taken from ſuppoſed Differences between the *Two Houſes*, in which Caſe the *Crown* will not be able to put an End to them, by creating a *Number* of *Lords*. Now the MODERATOR's Propoſal will leave this Difficulty juſt where the *Bill* does. This *fatal Inconvenience* is not at all remedied by *Lords* made *without* a Power of voting: And therefore, the very Principal Objection againſt the *Bill* it ſelf, lies as ſtrongly againſt the MODERATOR's *Scheme*. If I might have leave to make uſe of the MODERATOR's way of Thinking, to perſwade the Others, I would argue, That ſince, according to the MODERATOR, it is highly Neceſſary that the Power of making Lords, for a particular Occaſion, ſhould be taken away; and ſince this cannot be done without taking away the *Power* of determining Differences between the *Two Houſes*, by the Force of a *Number* of New Creations; it is certainly better that this laſt Accidental Inconvenience ſhould be left to o-

ther

ther Remedies; rather than an *Evil*, big with the moſt certain and fatal Evil Conſequences, ſhould be effectually prevented.

I heard what was ſaid in the *Houſe*, by the *Noble Lord*, mentioned by the MODERATOR. He did indeed declare that the Main End in *his* View, was to preſerve the *Liberty* of the *Votes* of that *Honourable* Houſe. But yet, I ſhall not at all wonder, if That *Noble Lord* ſhould find himſelf Diſpoſed to make thoſe Allowances on the part of *Scotland*, which might make every thing the more eaſy there; and not at all diſpoſed to accept of the MODERATOR's Propoſal, inſtead of the *preſent*, for theſe Reaſons: Becauſe it does not anſwer certainly even that *One End*, the Noble Lord declared to be in his View; unleſs you can ſuppoſe it *impoſſible* for *Evil Miniſters* to chuſe Excellent Tools two Years before they can work with Them; or to pick out Men of Implicit Faith, who may be ready at a Minute's Warning for any thing: Becauſe this Propoſal is hard upon the *Commons*, for whom that *Noble Lord* all along expreſs'd the higheſt regard; abſolutely diſcouraging, according to the *Propoſer* himſelf, all Men of *Great Alilities* from thinking of *That*, which they now think of, as their Re[illegible] cauſe it will fill the Houſe of *Lords* with T[illegible] who are no *Honour* to any Houſe: And becau[illegible] be ſo far from leaving the *Prerogative* of the Crown that it will leave it no *Subjects* to exerciſe its Favo[illegible] on, but ſuch as it ought not to be exercis'd upon.

The MODERATOR ends, as he began, with an Inſ[illegible] tion of Ends the *Miniſters* are aſhamed to own, and w[illegible] yet do not appear. This ſhews that Satire is eaſier [illegible] *Argument*; and lays Him open to this obvious Re[illegible]de That *He*, who, inſtead of Reaſon againſt a *Bill* p[illegible]opoſ[illegible] *Parliament*, has recourſe to *Perſonal Reflections*, and In[illegible]

tions, leads the World naturally to think, That the *Argument* ran more ſtrongly againſt Him than He is willing to own: And again, That it cannot be a *good Argument* againſt a *Bill*, That the *Propoſers* have *Bad Deſigns*, tho' we can't yet find them out; eſpecially when theſe ſuppoſed *Bad Deſigns* are ſuch as might be carried on *without* this *Bill*; and are not at all certain of Succeſs, after the paſſing it.

FINIS.